

PRISONER CIVIL RIGHTS INSTRUCTION SHEET

If you wish to file a prisoner civil rights case in the United States District Court for the Western District of Michigan you must follow the specific instructions listed below:

1. A Prisoner Civil Rights Complaint must be *legibly* handwritten or typewritten.
2. The clerk's office will provide a limited number of complaint forms upon request. You are responsible for any extra copies needed.
3. You, as plaintiff, must sign and date the complaint. If the complaint is being filed by more than one plaintiff, a signature from each plaintiff is required.
4. You are required to furnish the correct name and address of each person you have named as a defendant. You must provide an original complaint and one copy for the court. If the court determines that the complaint should be served on one or more defendants, the court will specifically order you to provide further copies for this purpose. Until ordered to do so, do not submit to the court copies of the complaint or exhibits for purposes of service on defendants.
5. **A filing fee of \$150.00 is required.** If you cannot afford the entire filing fee at this time, you may request permission from the court to have your complaint proceed *in forma pauperis* by completing and signing a financial declaration. You must also have an authorized officer in charge of financial records at the institution issue a certificate establishing prisoner account activity with attached printout. If a printout is not available at the institution, the authorized officer must complete the certificate located on the financial declaration. Whichever method is used, the authorized officer must first have your financial declaration. Note: If the complaint is being filed by more than one plaintiff, a financial declaration must be completed for each plaintiff named.
6. When your case is filed you will be notified of the case number and the name of the judge to whom the case is assigned. If the filing fee has been paid, you will receive a copy of your receipt. If the court has granted your request to proceed *in forma pauperis*, you will receive a copy of the order to proceed. Under the Prison Litigation Reform Act of 1995, PUB. L. No. 104-134, a prisoner allowed to bring a civil action *in forma pauperis* must pay the full civil action filing fee. An order for payment of filing fee (in installments) will issue shortly thereafter and you will receive a copy.
7. If these instructions are not followed, your complaint and all copies will be returned to you with a notation as to the requirements not yet completed.